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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4657
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 000676

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/15/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [KISL](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDANIAN TRAINING OF PALESTINIAN SECURITY FORCES
CRITICIZED IN PRESS

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) Independent daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm criticized U.S.-sponsored training of Palestinian Security Forces in Jordan in a March 9 editorial, suggesting a pause in activity given Israeli settlement activity and its recent operations in Gaza. The article by managing editor Fahd Khitan charged Jordan with rendering a service in favor of Fatah against Hamas. Jordan originally agreed to train Palestinian Security Forces as part of its efforts to support the peace process and the two-state solution, which would secure Jordan's demographic and national security on the strategic level, according to Khitan. The presence of a qualified Palestinian security force in the West Bank has, however, become "cover for Israel to implement its settlements projects without any resistance," according to Khitan. It also allowed Abbas to crack down on Palestinians protesting against Israel's operations in Gaza.

¶2. (U) As a result, Israel "strongly supported" the administration increase of the training budget for the Palestinian police in Jordan "by 70 percent to reach a total of 130 million dollars this year, compared to 75 million last year," according to Khitan. (Note: These figures reflect the overall budget of the U.S. Security Coordinator (USSC) in Jerusalem rather than the funds allocated for training in Jordan. End note.) Under these circumstances, it is not in Jordan's interest to continue training the Palestinian Security Forces, Khitan asserted. The presence of qualified Palestinian security forces in the West Bank has in fact increased the threat of Jordan being called upon to enlarge its role in the West Bank, he added, playing on Jordanian fears that involvement in the West Bank would be a step toward Jordan becoming an alternative to a Palestinian state.

¶3. (C) Comment: The Government of Jordan (GOJ) and its Public Security Directorate (PSD), which conducts the training of the Palestinian Security Forces in cooperation with the USSC in Jerusalem, LTG Keith Dayton, have previously stressed their desire to keep their involvement from being discussed publicly. While the government-aligned Jordan Times mentioned the training in a March 6 article in the context of the administration's plan to increase the budget, public criticism of Jordan training the Palestinian Security Forces has so far been limited to this one article.

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Beecroft